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Special points of interest:

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- Christmas Gift Lift Report/
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- Fourth Quarter Activities
- MHAI Public Policy Agenda
- Recruiting CASA Volunteers
- Upcoming Events

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Mental Health America of Jackson County

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Bipolar Disorder

Bipolar Disorder is a treatable illness marked by extreme changes in mood, thought, energy and behavior. Bipolar disorder is also known as manic depression because a person's mood can alternate between the "poles" - mania (highs) and depression (lows). The change in mood can last hours, days, weeks or months.

Bipolar disorder is not a character flaw or a sign of personal weakness.

It affects more than 5.7 million adults Americans and 444,000 adult Canadians. It usually begins in late adolescence, often appearing as depression during teen years, although it can start in early childhood or later in life.

An equal number of men and women develop the illness. Men tend to begin with a manic episode, women with a depressive episode. Bipolar disorder is found among all ages, races, ethnic groups and social classes. The illness tends to run in families. Like depression and other serious illnesses, bipolar disorder can negatively affect spouses, partners, family members, friends and co-workers.

Different types of the illness are determined by patterns and severity of symptoms of high and lows.

Bipolar I Disorder is characterized by one or more manic episodes that last at least a week or require hospitalization. Episodes of depression and hypomania may also occur. Some mood episodes may have mixed features (symptoms of both depression and mania/hypomania). Behavior during mania and disability during bipolar depression can lead to severe financial, family and social disruption.

Bipolar II Disorder is characterized by one or more depressive episodes accompanied by at least one hypomanic episode. Hypomanic episodes have symptoms similar to manic episodes but are less extreme and don't last as long. However the person's behavior is clearly different from normal to observers.

Cyclothymic Disorder is characterized by chronic mood fluctuations that do not reach the level of full manic or depressive episode. However, symptoms cause significant distress in personal relationships, work or school and other areas of life when they occur. Although symptoms are relatively mild compared to Bipolar I or Bipolar II, they recur within 2 months each time. People with cyclothymia may go on to develop a more extreme form of bipolar illness.

Bipolar Disorder cont.

Symptoms of Mania:

- Increased physical and mental activity and energy
- Heightened mood, exaggerated optimism and self-confidence
- Excessive irritability, aggressive behavior
- Decreased need for sleep without experiencing fatigue
- Racing speech, thoughts, and flight of ideas
- Increase sexual drive
- Reckless behavior

Symptoms of Depression:

- Prolonged sadness or unexplained crying spells, profound hopelessness
- Significant changes in appetite and sleep patterns,
- Irritability, anger, worry, agitation, anxiety
- Pessimism, loss of energy, persistent lethargy
- Feelings of guilt and worthlessness
- Inability to concentrate, indecisiveness
- Recurring thoughts of death and suicide

Because bipolar disorder tends to run in families, having a parent with bipolar increases the likelihood that a child also develop bipolar. When one parent has bipolar disorder, the risk to each child is estimated to be 15 - 30 percent. When both parents have the disorder, the risk increases to 50 -75 percent.

Symptoms of mood disorder may be difficult to recognize in children and adolescents because they can be mistaken for age-appropriate emotions and behaviors or overlap with symptoms of other conditions such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). However, depression and anxiety in children may be precursors to bipolar and should be carefully evaluated and monitored.

Treatment for Bipolar

Several therapies exist for bipolar disorder and promising new treatments are currently under investigation. Because bipolar disorder can be difficult to treat, it is highly recommended that you consult a psychiatrist or general practitioner with experience in treating this illness. Treatments may include medication, talk therapy, and support groups.

For more information go to bphope.com

Christmas Gift Lift Report

We had two successful socials with 110 people and 85 clients attending the event at Central Christian Church and 32 clients at Centerstone. Both groups were very appreciative of the gifts and effort that the Board and staff provided. It was a lot of work but very rewarding. We did not raise as much money as we did in 2014 but the community helped out tremendously. We thank the Seymour Tribune for publishing an article about our event at Central Christian Church.

Fourth Quarter Activities

Three "I'm Thumbody" classes at Head Start 65 students ; Three I'm Thumbody classes at Seymour High School 11 children; Three I'm Thumbody classes at Brown Pre-School 24 children; Christmas Social at Central Christian Church 110 people; Christmas Social at Centerstone 32 clients; Newsletter; Met with Jackson County United Way and responded to their concerns; Participated on Jackson County Drug Free Council Board of Directors; Delivered wreaths; Wrote letter to editors of Seymour Tribune, Jackson County Banner and Crothersville Times for the Jackson County United Way; Started planning process for 2016 Kid's Fest; Decorated the window at CAB for Christmas Gift Lift

Christmas Gift Lift Thank You

We would like to thank the following groups and individuals who supported our Christmas Gift Lift in 2015: Cummins Engine Company, Kremers Urban Pharmaceuticals, Dicksons, Bevers Pharmacy, Seymour Community Schools, Brownstown Central Schools, Crothersville Community Schools, Medora Community Schools, State Bank of Medora, Kids & Kettles, Tri Kappa, Delta Kappa Gamma, Jackson Lodge #146, Fraternal Order of Eagles Auxiliary #655, Loyal Devoir of Central Christian Church, Fraternal Order of Eagles #655, Berkshire Hathaway, Brownstown Afternoon Extension, Latina 4H Group, Seymour Tribune, Glen Heidman, Gene J. Knott, Sandra Zickler, Roberta Speaker, C. Ann Zabel, Ruby Niccum, J.A. Thomas, Helen Horton, Tom & Darlene Cooley, Jan Morrison, Central Christian Church and members of the Mental Health America of Jackson County Board of Directors.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance - VITA

VITA is a service of the Jackson County United Way. IRS certified volunteer tax preparers are trusted experts who **will file your taxes for free with a household income below \$60,000**. Filing assistance is available for a wide variety of returns including individual and families.

- The site is open February - April 15
- For location, hours & dates of operation and to make an appointment: **Dial 2-1-1 or 812-376-6666**
- **File for Free Online**

You may also qualify to file online for free through our partnership with www.myfreetaxes.com

A Free alternative for Tax preparation

MHAI Public Policy Agenda

Mental Health America of Indiana, MHAI, is supporting the following issues in this year :

- Access to medications for mental health and substance abuse
- Forensic issue - individuals who have mental illness, addictions and co-occurring development disabilities often fall through the cracks in our criminal justice system
- Opioid Treatment
- Mental health and addiction funding
- Smoke-free air, and Cigarette tax
- Underage drinking
- Affordable Care Act & HIP 2.0
- Marriage Equality
- Perinatal Substance Abuse
- Access to mental Health and Addiction Services for Veterans
- Children's Mental Health and Safety
- Suicide Prevention
- Mental Health Hospitals
- Death Penalty and People with Mental Illness
- Harm Access
- Access to Services

MHAI has prioritized these issues and you can learn more and follow their progress in the state legislature by going to their **website mhai.net**

Challenging Valentine's Day Stereotypes

Maybe Valentine's Day should come with a warning: this Holiday maybe hazardous to your health. All the romantic expectations heaped on the single date can leave a wake of stress, disappointment and low self-esteem.

For people who are already feeling lonely or as if they will never find "the one," seeing jewelry ads and candy hearts at every turn can intensify those feeling. In 2012, the head of a Missouri crisis center reported that calls to the helpline typically jump by 50% on Valentine's Day, from 400 to 600 callers in need.

It is important to recognize negative thoughts or emotions and take a step back before you get sucked too far down. Decide if you need to talk to a sympathetic friend or mental health professional - or crisis hotline if necessary - to get some perspective.

You can also decide to challenge the Valentine's Day stereotypes, Some ideas:

- Do something to enrich others connections in your life. Call a relative who lives out of town, for example, or make plans to go out with a group of friends.
- Think about the love you can give. Offer to walk the dogs at an animal shelter. Arrange to visit residents at a nursing home. Commit random acts of kindness.
- Practice self-love. If a bubble bath surrounded by scented candles is your idea of bliss, go for it. Treat yourself to bouquet of your favorite flowers. Prepare a dish you really like and take the time to savor it.
- The bottom line is this: You don't have to buy into inflated expectations. And that goes for couples, too. Creating a strong relationship doesn't happen in a day. And elements like honest communication and attention to each other's needs become even more important when one partner has bipolar.

For more information "bp Magazine" - bphope.com

Upcoming Events

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

Children of Alcoholics Week February 7 - 15

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance - February - April 15

February 8 - 15 - Teens for Change Art Show, Jackson County Library Seymour

February 15 - Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM

February 16 - 2 I'm Thumbbody Classes at Seymour Head Start

February 17 - Mobile Food Pantry - Anchor House, Tanger Mall 10:00AMN - 12:00PM

February 19 - I'm Thumbbody Class at Seymour High School Special Ed

February 21 - Big Brothers Big Sisters "Bowl for Kid's Sake"

February 22 - Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM

February 25 - 2 I'm Thumbbody Classes at Brown Pre-school - Child Care Network

February 29 - Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM

March 7 - MHAJC Board Meeting, at the CAB, 4:00PM

March 8 - Jackson County Drug Free Council Meeting, Community Foundation Building, 4:00PM

March 14 - Discussion on Senior Scams, Attorney General Office, Seymour Community Center at 10:00AM

April 11 - MHAJC Board Meeting, at the CAB, 4:00PM

April 12 - Jackson County Drug Free Council Meeting, Community Foundation Building, 4:00PM

April 23 - Kids Fest - Seymour High School, 10:00AM - 1:00PM